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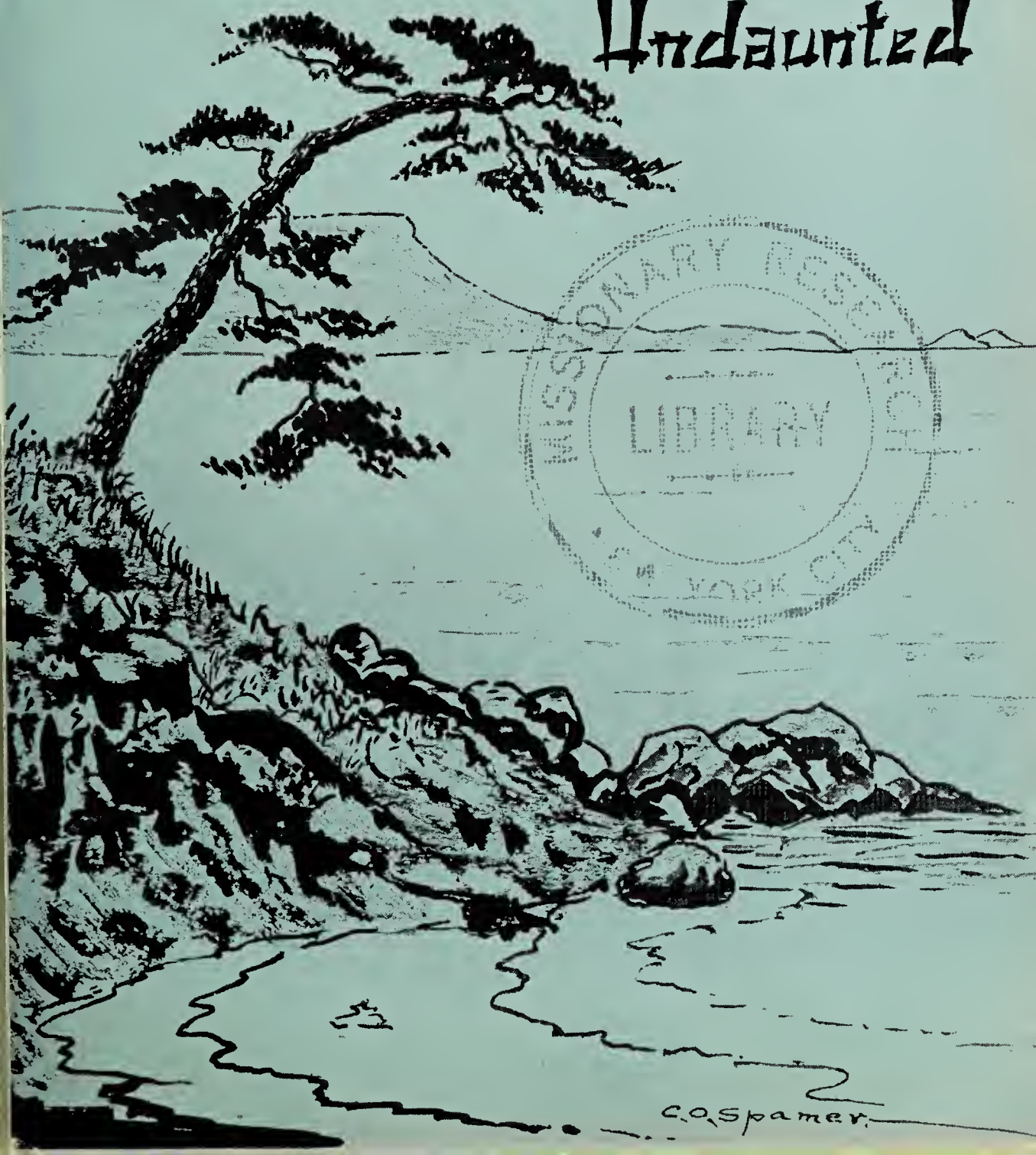
Souls Undaunted



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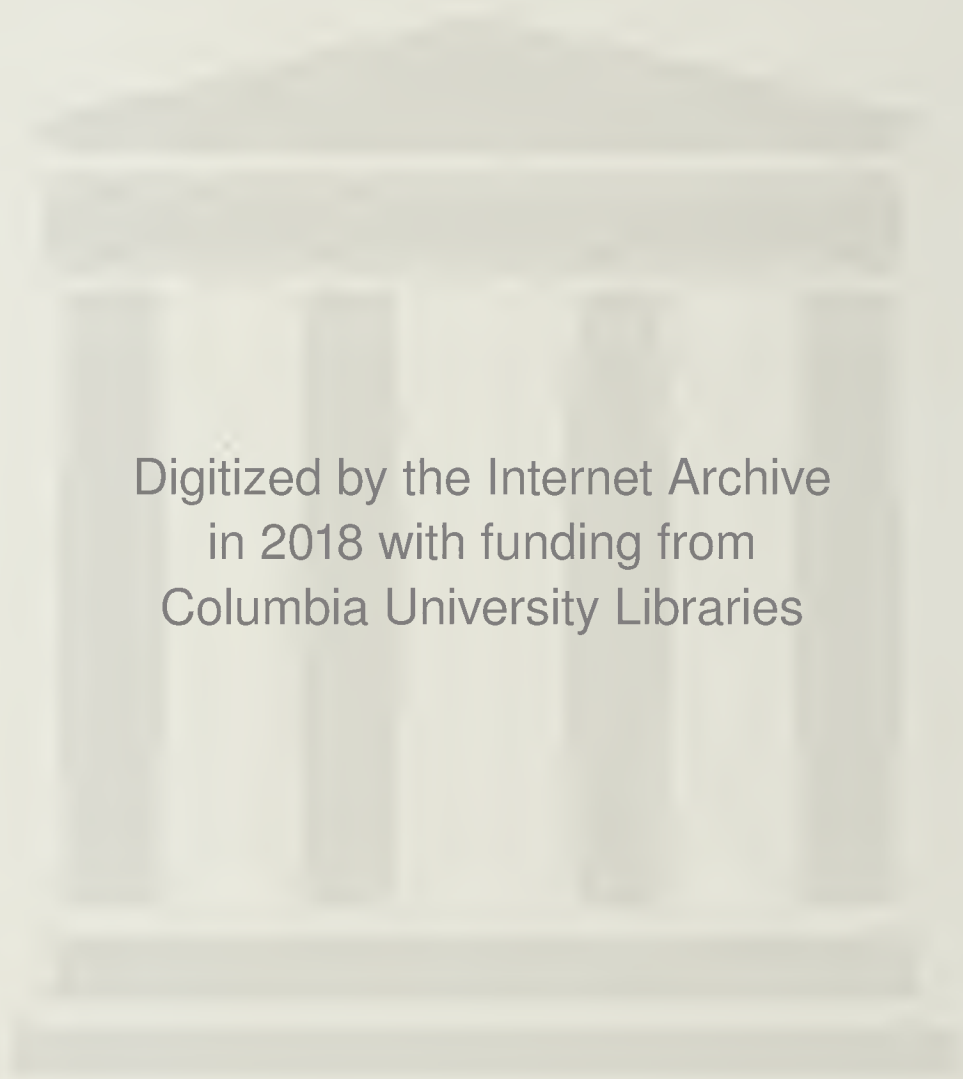
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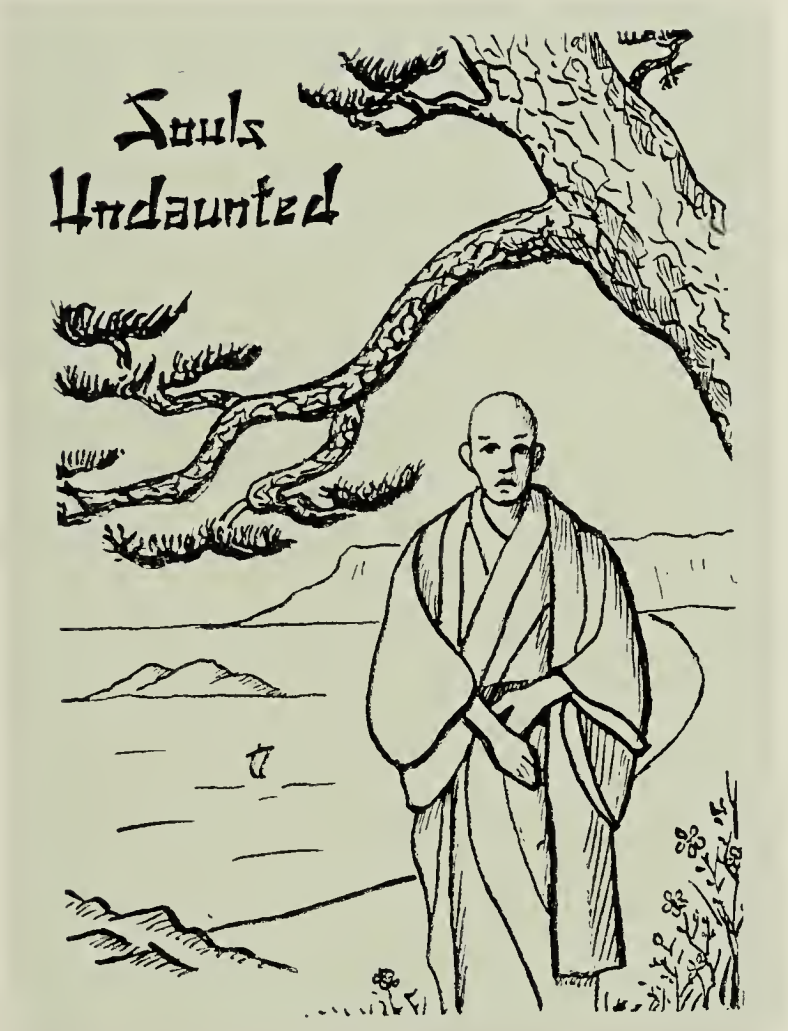

Verses from
THE CHRISTIAN POETRY CLUB
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OSHIMA, JAPAN

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LOIS ERICKSON
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Bearing reproach and shame,
Suffering, pain, and loss,
My SOUL UNDAUNTED still shall march,
Holding aloft the Cross!

Hayashi

When I would pray,
"Lord, take the thorn away,"
Clearly there comes to me
A vision of His Cross!

Mumei

Dear Master,
May Thy Light
Shine on me now,
As once it shone
Upon the Shepherds,
As they kept their flocks
By night!

Ozaki

The wireless brings us songs of Christmas praise
From far and near;
And listening we are one with you today,
Friends everywhere!

Yamamoto

I wander to a little pine clad hill
Above the sea
For prayer;
And every dawn I find a nightingale
Is singing there.

Mumei

Sometimes the angel voices are so clear
I feel my friends in Heaven must be near.
And lay me down and weep!

Handa

I know *Thou art*
When sudden prayer
Wells all unbidden
In my humble heart.

Kawabuchi

I would not change one little jot
Of his dear will for me;
But in my weakness I would go
Entrusting all my load of woe
To Him Who Walks with me.

Kanda

Oh, make my heart so still, so still,
When I am deep in prayer,
That I might hear the white mist-wreaths
Losing themselves in air!

Utsunomiya

In pale new dress
The little willow trees
Give themselves to the caress
Of the breeze.

Mumei

Men hate me for the curse I bear,
(I know it well)
But shall I heed them
Since my heart can be
A holy temple
Where my God can dwell?

Handa

I live in light and love,
By God's grace given;
Yet is my hungry heart
Homesick for Heaven!

Takamoto

Beyond the gates of death
Is joy,
Where many mansions smile;—
Then shall I fear the pain
That lasts
Only a little while?

Mumei

Others delight in length
of days;
But I —
I wait for the lover that I
long for,
Death!

Shirano

An ancient temple garden
Left to weeds;
Where little insects crowd to chirp and sing
Even at noon.

Mumei

Always when quietly I sit alone
I see
The faces of the friends I loved
So long ago
Come back to me.

Shirano

I kneel, O Lord,
To pray to Thee,
And do not know
When the hot tears
That wet my cheeks
Begin to flow!

Shirano

My hands are numb and broken,
I am blind;
And I can neither feel nor see
My little pot of violets;
So I bend to kiss
The wee, sweet flowers
That mean so much to me.

Mumei

A peasant
Seated on the dyke,
Munching his coarse, scant meal,
Among the wild chrysanthemums!

Kida

I sat upon my little porch
And whiled the sunny hours;
A friend came by and stopped to let
Me smell his bunch of flowers!

Yamaguchi

I strolled into the garden
After prayer,
And found a little bee
Was dancing
On the white azaleas there!

Handa

I stopped to watch the baby chickens feed a while;
And as they scratched in search of worms,
My gloom was gone,
And I
Found I could smile!

Hayashi

My bitter heart grows sweet
When my small kitten,
Caring not that I am blind,
Is frisking at my feet!

Taniguchi

Before I knew
I was a leper,
People used to ask
What make-up I could use
To keep my face so beautiful!

Shirano

I would
That I could enter in
And close the door
Of my small house
To dwell alone
As little shellfish do!

Mumei

A frowsy woman
Bending down
To do her washing
In a stream
That mirrors banks aglow
With blossoming plum!

Mumei

Since parting from my father
I have watched
Ten slow years roll;
Lost is the father of my flesh,
But found,
The Father of my soul!

"Shinja"

Today I walked along the beach
Where no one else would be;
And took
My grandchild's picture
From my breast,
And wept,
Where none could see.

Kanda

The soul is like to iron
Melted in the forge;
Each blow that strikes upon it
Makes it yet more strong!

Mumei

All joy is God's own gift,
All suffering,
And both are blessing;
So I shall give thanks
in everything!

Egi

I know that if my prayer
In perfect faith is given,
I can, as once Elijah did,
Call down the rain
And fire from Heaven!

Handa

If true love is there,
The more we love,
Then all the more we pray;
There is no greater love than prayer!

Takamoto

Today there is no respite
From my constant pain,
Except to dream
Of playing on the hills
When spring comes back again!

Mumei

I shall press on
Along the path of faith;
For all the business of my life
Is prayer—
Till death.

Takamoto

I *hear*
The grinding,
Grinding,
As they take my leg;
I *see*
The Christ upon His Cross!

"Shinja"

Hither have I come
Leaning upon the Cross;
But now, the *Crown!*

Miyauchi

In a voice made tremulous
By the cold wind,
Some bird I do not know
Is singing among the yellowed reeds.

Mumei

Those joys are very few
That illness brings;
So I shall lie and think
Of lovely things!

Mumei

To the heart aglow for Thee
The Valley of the Shadow
Is like sunrise on the sea!

Utsunomiya

My Lord in me has found a dwelling place;
And I in Him. Oh, glorious boon to gain
To be His temple! Gladly will I face
In His great strength all bitterness and pain!

Nagata

45-23-10

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